PROPOSED ACTION AND PURPOSE AND NEED
Soldier Mountain
Wildland Urban Interface Project

USDA Forest Service
Lassen National Forest, Hat Creek Ranger District
October 26, 2020

1.0 Introduction

The Hat Creek Ranger District of the Lassen National Forest (LNF) is proposing the Soldier Mountain Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) project. The primary purpose of the project is to reduce fuel levels and increase fire resiliency on 3,000 acres of National Forest System (NFS) lands adjacent to the communities of Glenburn and Dana in Shasta County, CA (Figure 1). This project is supported by the Burney-Hat Creek Community Forest and Watershed group. The Hat Creek Ranger District and project partners have prioritized the Soldier Mountain WUI project due to a combination of excessive fuel levels, proximity to residences and critical infrastructure, and frequency of public use. Forest fuel conditions in the project area support high severity wildfires and present a risk to emergency responders, the public, and forest resources.

The Soldier Mountain WUI zone is categorized as an Intermix Community, where there is no clear line of demarcation separating wildland fuels present on public lands and those present on private lands. To achieve WUI goals for this community, three treatment units that range in size from 207 to 2,392 acres have been strategically located adjacent to critical infrastructure, along property boundaries, and along roads (Figures 2 and 3). All three units are located within the Dana 7.5' USGS Topographical Quadrangles (Table 1). The Alpine Subdivision and other private homes/ranches lie within 0.5 miles of the eastern project boundary. Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) owns and maintains an underground natural gas pipeline that crosses Unit 2 (Figure 2). There is one seasonally flowing drainage, Soldier Creek, present within the project area that is part of the Soldier Creek-Pit River hydrological unit (HUC12 = 180200031003). This ephemeral drainage originates on the south slope of Soldier Mountain and flows southwest into the Pit River at Lake Britton (Pit River No. 3 Reservoir).

Proposed treatments include thinning, mastication, machine piling, road improvements, and the use of prescribed fire. Reforestation of areas burned by the 2005 Brown Fire and restoration of meadow habitat along Soldier Creek are also proposed.

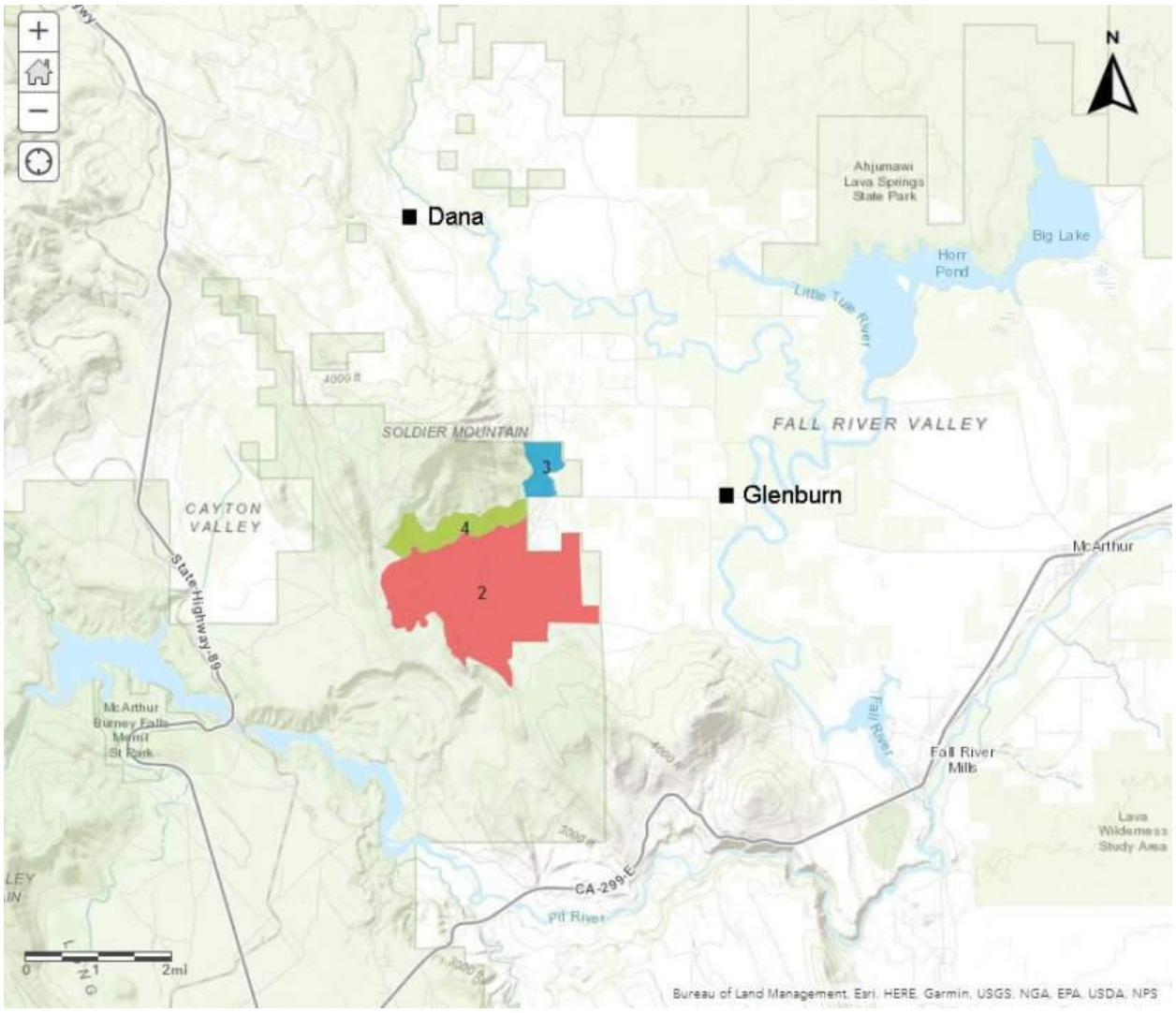

Figure 1. Location of Soldier Mountain WUI project area (Units 2, 3, and 4) near the communities of Dana and Glenburn in Shasta County, California.

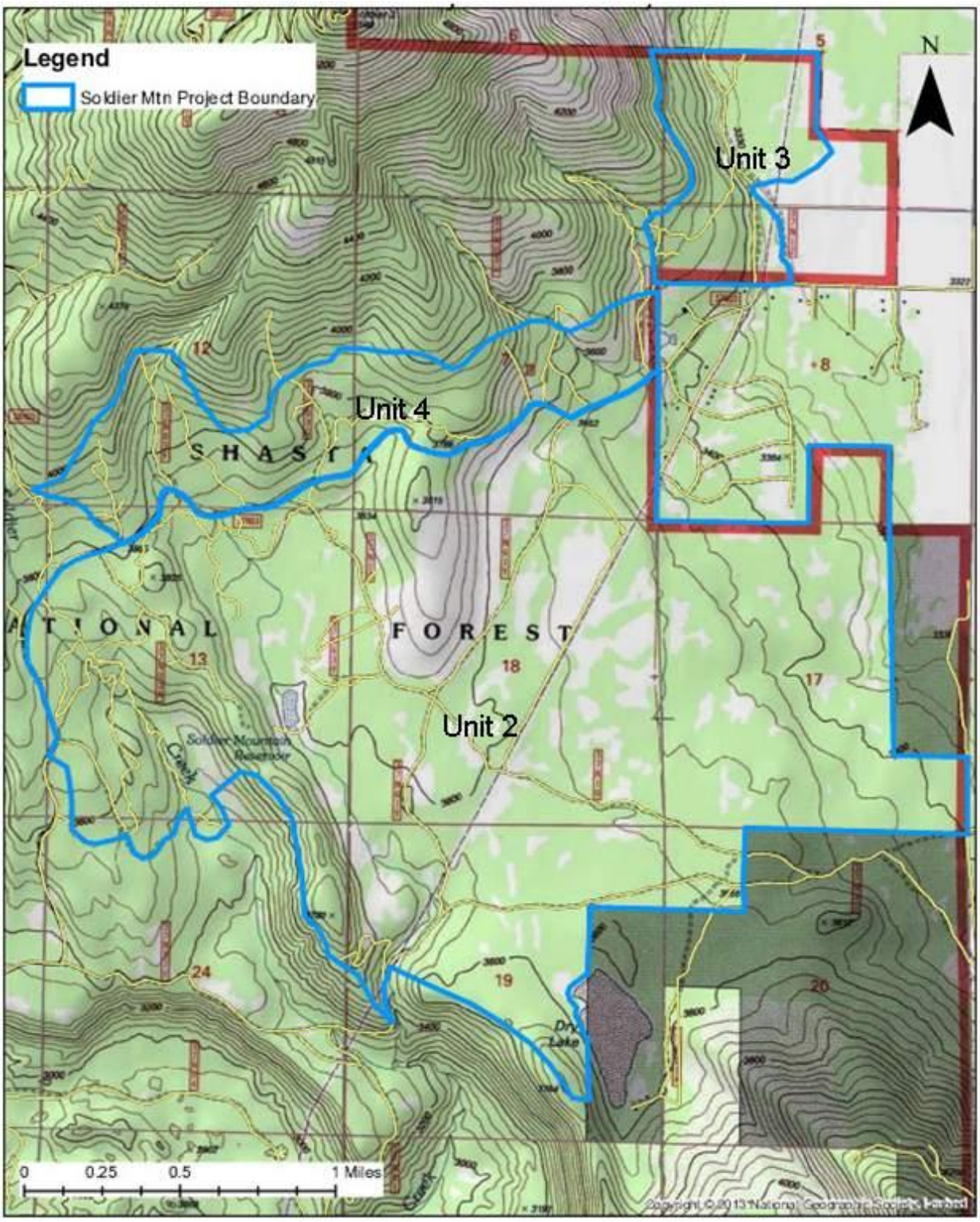

Figure 2. Soldier Mountain Project Area showing the three proposed treatment units.

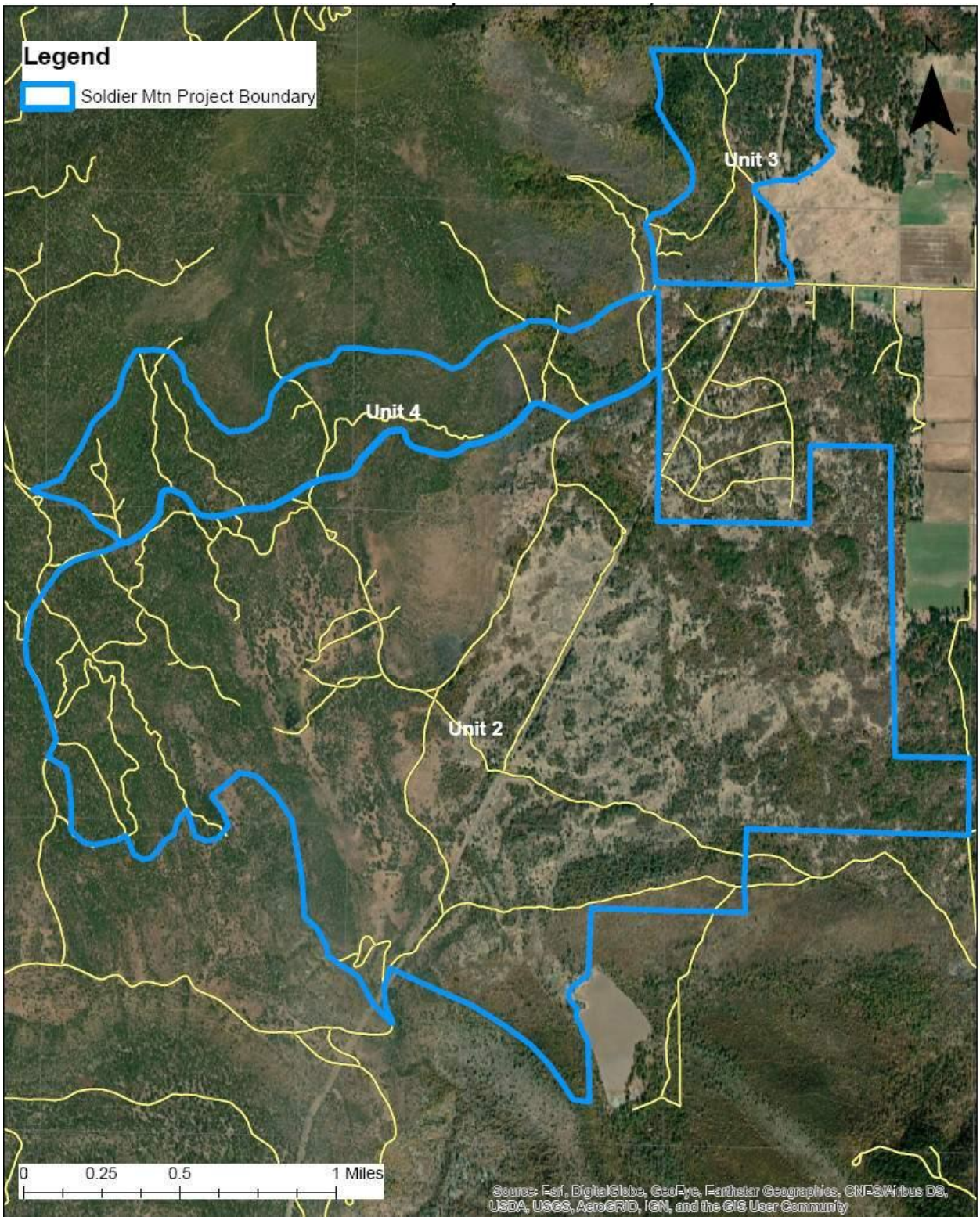

Figure 3. Aerial image of Soldier Mountain Project Area showing existing roads (in yellow).

Table 1. Legal description of Soldier Mountain WUI Project Area

Portions of Sections	Township	Range	Base
5,6, 7, 8, 17, 18, 19, 20	37N	4E	Mount Diablo
12, 13, 24	37N	3E	Mount Diablo

2.0 Management Direction

The proposed action is guided by the 1992 Lassen National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) and 1993 Record of Decision (ROD) (USDA-FS 1993), as amended by the Sierra Nevada Forest Plan (SNFP) Amendment FEIS and ROD (USDA-FS 2004a,b), and the SNFP Management Indicator Species Amendment (USDA-FS 2007). The Soldier Mountain WUI Project is located in the Britton Management Area under the Lassen LRMP.

The Soldier Mountain WUI Project is designed to be consistent with the National Forest Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1600), National Environmental Policy Act (36 CFR 220), National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470), Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. 1531), Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1351), Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7401), and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (42 U.S.C. 6901 et seq.).

The Hat Creek Ranger District has made a preliminary assessment that this proposed project may fall under one or more Categorical Exclusion (CE) categories listed under 36 CFR 220.6(e) and Title VIII, Section 8204 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA), as amended by the 2014 Farm Bill. Projects planned under these CE categories are designed to reduce the risk or extent of, or increase the resilience to, insect or disease infestation and promote forest health (HFRA Sec 602(d)(1)(b)). Although it is expected that a Decision Memo documenting the analysis and effects will be prepared, the level of analysis required for this project will be determined by the issues raised during the scoping process.

3.0 Purpose and Need for Action

The purpose of the Soldier Mountain WUI project is to reduce fire danger and increase resiliency of the forest ecosystem to fire, drought, and insects on 3,000 acres of national forest lands within a priority WUI zone. Primarily driven by fire suppression; past management; and a warming, drying climate, the combination of fuel and vegetation changes within and surrounding the Soldier Mountain WUI project area has resulted in a landscape that is less resilient to disturbances including wildland fire, drought, insects, and disease. Much of the forest condition in the area is outside of the natural range of variability, as tree mortality and decadent brush are present at higher levels than would naturally occur in this forest type. Consequently, restoration actions are needed to

reduce the risk to wildland fire and move the project area toward healthier and more resilient conditions.

The goals of the Soldier Mountain WUI project are to:

1. Reduce the wildfire threat to human communities and ecosystems and natural resources (From the Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment) by reducing ladder fuels so that post treatment fire behavior is four feet or less flame length. Engine and hand crews can directly attack fires with flame lengths of four feet or less.
2. Improve the resilience of timber stands to future disturbance events by creating a more open and spatially heterogeneous forest dominated by fire-resistant tree species[1] and reducing tree densities to decrease risk of mortality from insects, drought, disease, and wildfire.
3. Improve the transportation system by restoring permanent NFS roads and decomissioning "user created" roads/trails to provide an efficient transportation system for emergency responders and safe public access.
4. Restore meadow habitat along Soldier Creek by removing encroaching pine trees and eliminating a defunct barbed wire fence that poses a threat to wildlife and the public.
5. Implement reforestation in forest stands burned by the 2005 Brown Fire.

Goal 1–Reduce Wildfire Threat

Current Condition: The current condition in the Soldier Mountain WUI project area is one where surface and ladder fuels have increased over time due to years of drought, and mortality caused from insects. The project area has had several wildfires within it or adjacent to it in the last two decades: Brown (2005), Gomez (2009), and Warner Grade (2013). The Power and Hat fires (2018) occurred adjacent to the project area. The three fires that burned within portions of the project area all occurred south of the 37N03 road (i.e., within Unit 2, Figure 2), which is the main access road to Soldier Mountain. These fires burned primarily brush; however, the Brown Fire burned some forest stands in the southern portion of the project area, to the north and west of Dry Lake (Figure 3), and these areas are now dominated by brush.

The wildfire conditions within the project area are characterized using fire regime condition class (FRCC), which is an interagency tool used to determine the degree of ecological departure from the historical, or reference condition. A fire regime is a generalized description of the role fire plays in the ecosystem, and it is characterized by fire frequency, predictability, seasonality, intensity, duration, scale (patch size), as well as regularity or variability. Five combinations of fire frequency, expressed as fire-return interval, and fire severity are defined:

[1] Fire-resistant trees are characterized as having a lower probability of being injured or killed by fire; locally, these species are primarily ponderosa and Jeffrey pines, as well as incense cedar.

Fire Regime I: 0-35 year frequency and low (surface fire most common) to mixed severity (less than 75 percent of the dominant overstory vegetation replaced).

Fire Regine II: 0-35 year frequency and high stand replacement severity (greater than 75 percent of the dominant overstory vegetation replaced)

Fire Regime III: 35-100+ year frequency and mixed severity (less than 75 percent of the dominant overstory vegetation replaced)

Fire Regime IV: 35-100+ years frequency and high (stand replacement) severity (greater than 75 percent of the dominant overstory vegetation replaced)

Fire Regime V: 200+ year frequency and high (stand replacement) severity.

The fire regimes for the Soldier Mountain WUI project area include Fire Regime 1 and Fire Regime 2. The timber stands are a Fire Regime 1, with a fire-return interval of 0-35 years and low fire severity. The brush fields in the project area are a Fire Regime 2, with a fire-return interval of 0-35 years and high fire severity.

Condition class is a qualitative measure that describes the relative degree of departure from the natural fire regime, as described in Table 2. Most of the project area is in Condition Class 3. The exception would be areas burned by the Gomez, Brown, and Warner-Grade fires, which are in Condition Class 2.

Desired Condition: Design mechanical treatments in brush and shrub patches, and remove surface and ladder fuels in conifer stands to achieve the following outcomes from a wildland fire occurring under 90th percentile weather conditions:

- wildland fire would burn with an average of four feet or less flame lengths,
- fireline production rates would be doubled,
- fire would result in less than 20 percent mortality in dominant and co-dominant trees, and
- fire would have 20 percent probability of initiation of crown fire

Need for Action: Based on the current stand structure, predicted fire behavior, and current fire regime condition class, the project is needed to:

- Reduce the intensity and severity of fires within the WUI;
- Reduce the potential for detrimental effects of large-scale, high-severity wildfire;
- Move the project area along a trajectory towards achieving fire regime condition class 1 and;
- Contribute to safer conditions under which fire fighters can implement fire suppression actions.

Table 2. Condition class descriptions and associated risks.

Condition Class	Description	Potential Risks
Class 1	Within the natural (historical)	Fire behavior, effects, and other associated disturbances are similar to those that occurred prior to fire exclusion (suppression) and other types of management that do not mimic the natural fire regime and associated vegetation and fuel characteristics. Composition and structure of vegetation and fuels are similar to the natural (historical) regime. Risk of loss of key ecosystem components (e.g. native species, large trees, and soil is low.
Class 2	Moderate departure from the natural (historical) regime of vegetation characteristics; fuel composition; fire frequency, severity and pattern; other associated disturbances	Fire behavior, effects, and other associated disturbances are moderately departed (more or less severe). Composition and structure of vegetation and fuel are moderately altered. Uncharacteristic conditions range from low to moderate. Risk of loss of key ecosystem components is moderate.
Class 3	High departure from the natural (historical) regime of vegetation characteristics; fuel composition; fire frequency, severity and pattern; and other associated disturbances	Fire behavior, effects and other associated disturbances are highly departed (more or less severe). Composition and structure of vegetation and fuel are highly altered. Uncharacteristic conditions range from moderate to high. Risk of loss of key ecosystem components is high.

Goal 2–Improve the resilience of timber stands to future disturbance events

Existing Condition: Many of the forested areas within the Soldier Mountain WUI have received limited forest management and are currently experiencing elevated levels of tree mortality caused by drought and bark beetles. Pockets of mortality occur where densities of small diameter trees are high and there is increased competition for soil nutrients and moisture. These dense stands dominated by younger trees do not meet desired conditions for WUI defense and threat zones (see 2004 SNFPA, ROD pp 40–41) and they contribute to high-intensity wildfires that spread rapidly from crown to crown.

Desired Condition: Vegetation would be managed to create forest conditions that include open growing space to reduce competition and enhance plant and wildlife diversity and a forest structure with heterogeneous spacing of uneven-aged trees

dominated by more shade-intolerant oaks and fire-resistant pines. The retention of large pines and oaks will ensure that habitat conditions for wildlife are maintained or improved while achieving WUI goals.

Need for Action: There is a need to remove dead and dying trees to prevent spread of insect infestations and disease; thin trees in dense stands where small-diameter trees hinder growth of larger trees, which provide better wildlife habitat; and increase distance between tree crowns to lessen risk of high-severity wildfires.

Goal 3–Improve transportation system

Existing Condition: NFS roads within the project area are currently degraded and in need of repair. Some roads are blocked by down wood or overgrown brush, which poses a problem for ingress and egress, and high fuel levels along accessible roads pose a significant wildfire risk. In addition, numerous user-created roads that branch off of NFS roads are currently impacting meadow habitat, wildlife habitat, and other sensitive resource areas within the project area.

Desired Condition: The desired condition within the project area is an efficient transportation system that allows public access for recreation without impacting sensitive resource areas, safe (low wildfire risk) ingress/egress during project implementation, and timely ingress/egress for fire-fighters during future wildland fires.

Need for Action: The Lassen LRMP provides direction to maintain all NFS roads and related structures to protect resources, meet contractual obligations, and provide an efficient transportation system to serve both current and anticipated management objectives. The current transportation system needs to be improved to achieve the desired condition, as directed by the Lassen LRMP.

Goal 4–Restore meadow habitat along Soldier Creek.

Existing Condition: Riparian and meadow communities throughout the project area are experiencing impacts associated with degraded habitat function. This includes encroaching western juniper (*Juniperus occidentalis*) in amounts that would not have been present historically. Physical and biological processes in these areas have also been altered as a result of fire exclusion, hydrologic changes caused by past road work, and fence construction within meadow and riparian habitat along Soldier Creek.

The barbed wire fence that once enclosed the meadow is currently falling down. Most of the barbed wire is on the ground and in many places the brush has grown up around the downed fence. Wooden braces have fallen over. The fence follows the 37N61Y road, which is a major access road needed for firefighting. The current condition of the fence also poses a threat to wildlife, including large mammals such as deer and migratory waterfowl that could be entangled in the fence en route to Soldier Mountain Reservoir (Figure 2).

Desired Condition: The desired conditions of the riparian, meadow, and meadow edge communities is to improve habitat function by decreasing encroaching western juniper in order to enhance opportunities for wildlife, native plants, habitat connectivity,

and sensitive species. This would be accomplished by maintaining and restoring species composition and structural diversity of plant and animal communities to provide desired habitats and ecological functions. Desired conditions for wet meadows are further described in the 2004 SNFPA, Record of Decision (USDA Forest Service 2004b, pp. 32-33, 42-43).

The desired condition for meadow access is one where no barriers exist to hinder firefighter access to the project area, and no hazardous barbed wire exists to hinder wildlife access to the meadow.

Need for Action: There is a need to enhance riparian, meadow, and meadow edge areas in the project area; and improve the hydrologic conditions that resulted from past management activities. There is the need to allow these communities to revegetate with plants associated with the riparian and montane meadows, including silver sage (*Artemisia cana*) and bunch grasses such as meadow barley (*Hordium brachyantherum*), to improve habitat function and the ability of the meadow to retain water longer into the summer.

There is a need to remove the defunct barbed wire fence that hinders firefighter access to the project area and poses a threat of entanglement to wildlife.

Goal 5–Implement reforestation in Brown Fire burned area

Existing Condition: Approximately 120 acres of forested habitat within the Soldier Mountain WUI project area burned during the 2005 Brown Fire, and natural reforestation has not occurred in these areas. Brush quickly established within high severity burned sites, which deterred natural reforestation and recovery of the pre-existing forest stands.

Desired Condition: A restored forest landscape that provides wildlife habitat and ecological services. Establish forest species diversity with site appropriate trees with variable densities that are resilient to inherent disturbances at multiple scales (wildfire, drought, and insect/disease) and changing climate.

Need for Action: There is a need to restore forested habitat within the Soldier Mountain WUI project area that burned during the 2005 Brown Fire.

4.0 Proposed Actions

4.1 Thinning and Fuels Management

Project goals 1 and 2 will be accomplished using commercial thinning and sanitation/salvage harvesting of merchantable timber, and biomass thinning of non-merchantable trees and brush to reduce inter-tree competition and reduce surface and ladder fuels. In areas proposed for mechanical treatment, ground-based equipment would be utilized on slopes up to 35 percent to harvest trees greater than or equal to 3.0 inches diameter at breast height (DBH) and less than 30 inches DBH, except where noted otherwise. Whole-tree yarding would be used when possible, with no proposed

mechanical treatments on slopes greater than 35 percent. Hand treatments would occur in streamside areas where equipment cannot be used. Hand treatments include felling trees and pile burning. Activity-generated landing slash would be machine piled and burned.

Within treatment areas, trees 30 inches DBH and larger and conifer snags 15 inches DBH and larger would be retained within the limits of safety and operability, with the exception that dead or dying trees would not be retained within 150 feet (approximately one and one half tree lengths) of designated Forest roads. Dead and dying trees would be designated using Hazard Tree Guidelines for Forest Service Facilities and Roads in the Pacific Southwest Region (Angwin et al. 2012).

Thinning treatments will occur in commercial timber stands, non-commercial timber stands, oak woodland stands, and brush-dominated stands. These stands are classified by their dominant vegetation type, as described below.

Commercial timber stands:

- The Eastside ponderosa pine (EPN) stands are typically an overstory of ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) where the trees are generally overstocked and exhibiting increased levels of mortality due to insect infestations and in some areas, root rot pathogens. These stands are 95% ponderosa pine with less than 5% minor species (i.e., incense cedar [*Calocedrus decurrens*], sugar pine [*Pinus lambertiana*], Douglas-fir [*Pseudotsuga menziesii*], and white fir [*Abies concolor*]). The associated understory is generally California black oak (*Quercus kelloggii*) and Oregon white oak (*Quercus garryana*) (single stems, 10+ inches diameter at breast high [DBH]) and younger oaks that grow in many-stemmed clumps. Brush species present include manzanita, whitethorn, and bitterbrush.

Non-commercial timber stands:

- Gray pine (*Pinus sabiniana*)-oak stands are typically California black oaks and Oregon white oaks that are dominated by the gray pines that tend to shade out the oaks. Understory species are comprised of younger oaks that grow in many-stemmed clumps. Brush species present include manzanita, whitethorn, and bitterbrush.

Oak woodland stands:

- Montane Hardwood-Conifer (MHC) stands are typically California black oaks and Oregon white oaks with scattered commercial conifers and occasional clumps of commercial conifers. Brush species present include manzanita, whitethorn, and bitterbrush.
- Montane Hardwoods (MHW) stands are typically California black oaks and Oregon white oak. Brush species present include manzanita, whitethorn, and bitterbrush.

Brush-dominated stands:

- Most of Unit 2 is dominated by brush species with few to no trees. Dominant brush species include manzanita, whitethorn, and bitterbrush.

The thinning treatments in timber stands will emphasize removal of smaller trees in the understory (thin from below) by primarily removing trees in the suppressed and intermediate crown class positions and removing some codominant/dominant trees to meet desired stocking levels. Additionally, the thinning treatments will target the removal of damaged and diseased trees and favor the retention of trees free of damage and defect. The prescriptions for each forest stand type are summarize below.

4.1.1 Commercial Forest Stands

Commercial Thinning Prescription would be used in EPN and MHC timber areas to increase the distance between crowns and increase individual tree vigor and reduce the ladder fuels. EPN stands would be thinned to a residual 60 to 80 square feet of basal area per acre and would retain the larger healthy diameter trees to promote an uneven-aged old growth forest. The low thinning will remove ladder fuels. Healthy, vigorous minor commercial species will be retained to increase biodiversity.

Sanitation-Salvage Prescription would be used in the MHC, and if needed in the EPN, stands to remove dead and dying trees that are stressed from years of drought, insects, root disease, and mistletoe infestations.

Trees to be removed would be determined by:

a) The California Pine Risk-Rating System (Smith et al. 1981)

b) The Ten-Year Risk Rating Systems for California Red Fir and White Fir (Ferrell 1989).

c) The 6-class Dwarf Mistletoe Rating System (Hawksworth 1977).

Trees that are considered a safety hazard, particularly along roads, trails, and high use areas would be removed. Trees may need to be removed individually, as insect or drought killed, or in small groups, as in mistletoe or root rot centers. There are no basal area/acre standards for Sanitation-Salvage.

Within the commercial thin and sanitation/salvage areas, biomass removal as well as radially thinning the oaks (using the double the diameter prescription) and reducing the brush component (using the double the canopy prescription) will reduce surface and ladder fuels.

4.1.2 Non-commercial Forest Stands

Gray pine-oak stands will be enhanced by removing the gray pines that can be utilized as biomass material, generally 16-inch DBH or less. Radially thinning the oaks using the double the diameter prescription (e.g., a 10 inch diameter oak will have all vegetation removed for 20 feet from the tree) and reducing the brush component using the double

the canopy prescription (e.g., the canopy diameter is 12 feet and will have all vegetation removed for 24 feet around the clump) is recommended.

4.1.3 Oak Woodland Stands

Montane Hardwoods (MHW) and Montane Hardwood-Conifer (MHC) stands would be treated to enhance growing conditions for older larger Oregon white and California black oaks through radial thinning. Competing conifers would be removed around oaks to enhance the growing environment for these hardwoods. Unique conifer trees, such as those exhibiting desirable wildlife characteristics, or large diameter conifers would generally be retained. The larger California black oak and Oregon white oak component (10+ inch DBH) would be thinned using a double the diameter rule (e.g., a 10-inch diameter oak would have all vegetation removed for 20 feet from the tree). The smaller California black oak and Oregon white oak component (less than 10 inch DBH, which usually grows in clumps of 3-10 stems) would use the double the canopy rule (e.g., the canopy diameter is 12 feet and would have all vegetation removed for 24 feet around the clump). Additionally, the brush component will be reduced by using the double the canopy prescription.

4.1.4 Brush Dominated Stands

The brush component would be reduced using the double the canopy rule (e.g. the canopy diameter is 10 feet and would have all vegetation removed for 20 feet around the clump) to increase available soil moisture levels within the brush fields. This treatment would reduce fuel levels and regenerate manzanita and ceanothus for wildlife habitat.

4.1.5 Fuels Management

Forest Stands: Thinning of the timber stands would be followed by machine piling, pile burning, and under-burning. Timber stands will be whole-tree yarded. Machine piling will be determined post-harvest and will only be used in areas of heavy fuels accumulations. Prescribed fire would be used to consume forest litter, existing slash, and activity-generated slash from vegetation treatments. Firelines will consist of roads, skid trails, or constructed fire line. Hand piling may also be used for any sensitive areas. Firelines may be needed around any units that are adjacent to private land boundaries for machine-pile and hand-pile units. Landing pile slash will be piled on the landing for burning.

Brush Fields: The brush fields in Unit 2 (Figure 1) will be treated using a combination of machine piling and/or mastication, where needed, and broadcast burning. Mastication and/or crushing of the brush could also be used to pre-treat areas before broadcast burning. Firelines will consist of roads, skid trails or constructed fire line. In the brush areas, machine line (bulldozer) may be needed for holding purposes.

4.2 Improve Transportation System

Existing roads will be used to access the Project Area during project planning and implementation. Where existing roads systems are not adequate to provide access to treatment areas, road improvements may be needed and/or temporary roads may be constructed.

Dead or dying trees hazard trees would be removed within 150 feet (approximately one and one half tree lengths) of designated Forest roads. Road maintenance during project implementation would include dust abatement, erosion controls, and maintenance; all of which will be implemented using best management practices. Upon project completion, temporary roads would be decommissioned, as would user-created roads that threaten sensitive resource areas.

4.3 Meadow Restoration

Proposed treatments within riparian conservation areas and meadows would remove western junipers up to 20 inches DBH and all other conifers up to 10 inches DHB using hand or mechanical treatments. Trees would not be cut in areas where sensitive botanical species are identified. Trees would be whole-tree yarded from the treatment areas.

Meadow edge restoration treatments would consist of heavy thinning within an area of approximately 150 feet starting from meadow edge to create a “feathered” condition that provides a transition from virtually no trees in the meadow to fully stocked forest stands in adjacent treatment units. Mechanical equipment would be used to treat trees up to 20 inches DBH. A feller-buncher or a chainsaw would be used to cut trees, and these trees would then be whole-tree yarded using a ground-based skidder to move material from the skid trail to the landing. This would require designated skid trails adjacent to treated areas. Landings would be located outside of the riparian conservation areas and meadows. Mechanical treatments within the meadow edge would be completed during the dry season to protect soils.

The barbed wire fence surrounding the meadow will be rolled up and removed from the area. All wooden and metal fence posts will also be removed from the project area. Any scattered wire on the ground will also be rolled up and removed.

4.4 Reforestation in Unit 2

Ponderosa pine seedlings may be planted to restore and enhance the productivity of the timberlands burned in the 2005 Brown Fire. Planting strategies would be designed to balance economics, long-term management feasibility, and desired future conditions. Preparing the sites for planting and future release of competing vegetation would either be done by manual or mechanized equipment.

Manual Release

Manual release of competing vegetation would occur on all planted areas, as needed. Manual release involves hand cutting (grubbing) competing vegetation within a five-foot radius of planted seedlings. Hand-cut vegetation would either be lopped and scattered or piled for burning.

Mechanical Release

If it is deemed more efficient and cost-effective based on-site conditions, mechanical release (generally masticating or pulling re-sprouted vegetation with an excavator that has a thumb bucket or similar), may be used in all planted areas less than 35% slope.

5.0 References

Angwin, P. A., Cluck D.R., Zambino P.J., Oblinger, B. W. and Woodruff W. C. 2012. Hazard Tree Guidelines for Forest Service Facilities and Roads in the Pacific Southwest Region. Report # RO-12- 01. 36 p.

Ferrell, 1989. Ten Year Risk Rating Systems for California Red Fir and White Fir: Development and Use. General Technical Report PSW-115, US. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Research Station. 13 p.

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Smith, Wickman, Hall, DeMars, and Ferrell. 1981. The California Pine Risk Rating System, General Technical Report WO-27, US. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service 17 p.

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USDA Forest Service (USDA-FS). 2004a. Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment, Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement. Pacific Southwest Region, United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Access: http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/snfpa/final-seis/.

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6.0 Next Steps

6.1 Responsible Official

The Responsible Official for the Soldier Mountain WUI Project is Andrew Hart, Acting District Ranger, Hat Creek District Ranger.

6.2 How to Provide Scoping Comments

The Hat Creek Ranger District is seeking your input as it relates to the proposed action and identification of any issues about the anticipated effects from this proposed action. Interested persons, state and local governments, and tribes are encouraged to participate now and throughout the development of this project. Please respond by December 12, 2020 so your comments may be fully considered as we move through the decision-making ("NEPA") process with this project.

Comments, written or oral, may be submitted to: Andrew Hart, Acting District Ranger, Hat Creek Ranger District, PO Box 220, Fall River Mills, CA 96028, (530) 336-5521, FAX: (530) 336-3338, during normal business hours. Hat Creek Ranger District Office's business hours are from 8 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday.

Electronic comments, in acceptable plain text (.txt), rich text (.rtf), or Word (.doc) formats, may be submitted to: comments-pacificsouthwest-lassen-hat-creek@fs.fed.us using Subject: Soldier Mountain WUI Project.

Pursuant to the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014 (Pub. L. No. 113-76) and the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Farm Bill) (Pub. L. No. 113-79), projects that are categorically excluded are not subject to pre-decisional administrative review or administrative appeal. Further, they are not subject to legal notice and comment under the pre-decisional administrative review process (36 CFR 218.23).

Comments received, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be part of the Project Record and available for public review.